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THE TOP OF THE PIANO.

BY A CAPTIOUS CONTRIBUTOR.

NOTHING, to my mind, gives so true an indication of the musical *status* of a person as the top of his piano. Whenever I enter a house for the first time, and am shown into drawing-room or study, my first glance, and that a searching one, is towards the pianoforte. Most rooms give plenty of indications as to the nature and qualities of their inhabitants, but—to a musician, at least—the one unfailing index of character is that indispensable article of furniture, the piano. I do not disregard its surroundings and adjuncts, such as the music-stool, the canterbury, and even the make of the instrument itself, but it is to the top of the piano that I look for information. As thus: in a country town a short time since, I called upon a leading local professor who was a total stranger to me. The first thing that caught my eye on entering his neat drawing-room—too neat to please me—was an ancient cottage-piano, upon the keyboard cover of which—not even on the top, observe, but on the keyboard cover—reposed two fluffy circular sheepskin mats; mats, too, of a bilious yellow colour, which aggravated the crime. Of course I knew the man's character from that moment as well as though I had known him for years. He was not an atom of a musician, but a conventional twaddler who would talk triviality by the hour, and bore you to death with details of his last severe cold six months ago. Again, at another house whither I repaired once to give a first lesson, I found a small pianette open—I like to see a piano always open—the keys showing decided hollows from wear, and the top covered with such piles and mountains of music that more than one avalanche had swept some to the ground on either side. The book most ready to hand was a well-worn copy of Bach's "Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues," and I instantly felt the conviction that here I should find my very best pupil, which conviction was quickly realized.

For the benefit of those who have given less attention to this subject than myself, it may perhaps be as well to here point out a few of the more expressive indices afforded by the top of the piano. Piles of music are always a good sign; the person who has a thin portfolio, or two or three pieces and songs laid ready to respond to the hollow demands of politeness, is a being to be shunned. Still the quality of those piles must be regarded, for what is a more appalling indication than the dropsical portfolio of the school-girl? Too many cheap editions of classics, if in the house of a person of means, show a lack of appreciation for good music; too many scores of comic operas (I like to see one or two) show a superficial taste. A grand piano, if owned by a real musician, will be placed as the central point of attraction in the room; he will regard it as sacrilege to lay even a piece of music upon it; unless, indeed, the room afford no other space for the disposal of it. I know such a musician, who, if a caller commits the solecism of putting his hat down on the piano, instantly and indignantly brushes the offending article to the floor, which makes things awkward for a stranger, particularly if he is at all bashful. A grand piano, if only for acoustic reasons, should be kept free from all encumbrance; but one need not be so particular with an upright. I do not like to see, though, a metronome in the middle, flanked by two neat piles of music; it looks scholastic and formal; I fear such a person has more industry than ability. The true musician or music student has always vast untidy heaps of music within easy reach—therefore, mostly on top of the piano; but if these are torn or scribbled over, it shows an unmethodical and careless mind, most likely a scrambling, careless player. A woman's piano is usually readily distinguishable from a man's—principally by the kind of music to be found on it, but also by many little indications too insignificant to detail, but which

strike the experienced eye altogether. The lodging-house piano, or boarding-house piano, is a truly fearsome instrument; it has usually not been tuned within living memory, is generally surmounted by something under a glass case—wax-flowers or a wedding cake ornament; the Family Bible and some dreary illustrated edition of some dreary classic have here their resting-place, and are only disturbed in the spring cleaning. One such place, I remember, had an india-rubber plant in a large pot on the piano. There was no saucer underneath, so it was evident that when the plant was watered the instrument likewise benefited. The lid, too, opened in half, so there was a providential crack to admit the refreshing moisture. On investigating the interior I found, as may be imagined, that every wire was rusted and broken, while the felt was dropping off the soaked hammers in all directions. A more deplorable spectacle I never saw but once, and that was a cottage piano washed in a gale from the Isle of Wight to Eastbourne, in a state of wreck that defies description.

Akin to the lodging-house piano is that of the Philistine, or unmusical person, recognizable at a glance. It is invariably surmounted by some incongruous article or articles, and has been even known to be decorated into supposed harmony with the room. Some people have painted panels or even looking-glasses let into the front; and in last year's Exhibition there was a piano with two little shelves of books—not music, but novels—crowning the sides. How truly British! The person who would paint the front of a piano or the back of a violin ought to be tarred and feathered; there is no other appropriate punishment. But the Philistine, like the lodging-house keeper, looks upon the piano solely as an article of furniture, and in fact uses it as an inferior kind of sideboard. Have you ever heard the story of the Manchester plutocrat who, in furnishing his London mansion, ordered a couple of grand pianos, and was intensely disgusted at not being able to get one to *slant the reverse way* so as to make a pair?

The pianoforte, that source of endless pleasure and infinite pain, in common with most familiar blessings, is often undervalued by its possessor. The dusty or spotless state of the top, too, reveals the degree of esteem in which the owner holds his instrument; indeed, a man's whole musical life may sometimes be read as in an open book by one who knows how to observe and interpret the manifold indications afforded by the top of the piano.

THE OPERA "THE TROUBADOUR."

(Continued from page 341.)

The fourth and last act passes in Margarida's chamber at Castle Rossilho. At its opening, the lovers are taking leave of each other, and Azalais is watching apprehensively to protect them from surprise. An Andante movement in F major, triple time, is the musical vehicle to which the words of farewell are set, as a trio with short ensemble sections. At its close the motive which played so prominent a part in Margarida's song at the beginning of Act III. is heard again (see the first example in last week's analysis). She asks him to sing as he goes away, and he does so, in the strains of his first song, "The sun-rays shine," which become fainter and fainter in the distance, till they are shut out by Azalais closing the window. At the same moment Count Raimon enters his wife's apartment, and with feigned good humour, orders a banquet to be prepared. A busy subject in D serves to accompany the preparations, and to introduce a grimly gay drinking song in G minor, three-eight time, at the last verse of which the voices of the two ladies join in, against the boisterous refrain. Their terror has been roused by the vague suggestions of Guillen's danger thrown out in Raimon's song, which is by no means the ordinary *brindisi* of conventional opera, but an integral part of the action. At the end of the song, a huntsman is seen to enter at the back of the stage, and give the count a signal, on which the latter calls for "better wine, the choicest in our vaults." When the red

wine is brought, he asks them, quoting the refrain of Guillem's song in Act I., to drink to the poet's health in "Sanh del Trobador." Whether or not Margarida is aware by some mysterious intuition of what has happened, we are not told, but she raises the goblet to her lips, and as she drinks she sees as in a vision, the fate that is upon their love. It will readily be imagined that so effective a situation as this has not been neglected by the composer. The scena sung at this point forms the climax of the act, and indeed of the whole opera. It begins with a broadly melodious theme in G major, set to the following words:

"I drink to an absent friend,
To a friend most leal and true,
To a faith that no fear could subdue,
To a troth that stood firm to the end."

The initial phrase is subjoined:



As soon as her lips have touched the cup, a modulation to E major takes place, and prepares for the declamatory part of her song. After a time the following theme becomes prominent, at first in the voice part, and subsequently in the accompaniment:—



The ascending scale is used throughout this scene, and it gives a feeling of unity to the whole song. The course of the scena is only interrupted by a brief word of warning given by Azalais, who intreats her sister to conceal her guilty love; but Margarida knows that it is too late for concealment, for she feels that the cruel deed has been already done. The conclusion of the song is formed by the resumption of the first phrase, quoted above, which appears now in C major, set to the following words:—

"Farewell to the days that pass,
To the darkness of sorrowful nights;
To a life that is brittle as glass—
I drink to the death who unites."

She throws the goblet to the floor, and at the same moment the strains of the hunting chorus in Act II. are once more heard, and at the back of the stage, revealed by the opening of the curtains being drawn back, appears a group of huntsmen, who bring in the body of Guillem on a bier. Raimon uncovers the face, with the words—

"Behold the quarry, even he, the poet,
Whose song was sweet in ladies' ears, whose blood
To-night in guise of wine served at our feast."

The musical exponent of the last words is the theme originally connected with the words "Sanh del Trobador." A brief allusion to the motive associated with Guillem (see first quotation on p. 324) leads to Margarida's final words:

"No meat or earthly drink shall touch these lips,
Nor take from them the sweetness which the blood
Of Guillem there has left."

Before she can be restrained from her purpose, she throws herself over the balcony into the depth below. The last section of the work, from the huntsman's chorus onwards, is in A major, and Margarida's abrupt conclusion on a high F natural is extremely effective. The "Sanh del Trobador" motive is once more heard in the orchestra as the curtain falls.

Reviews.

"Historical Sketch of Music, from the Most Ancient to Modern Times." By H. Brown, Author of "Shakespeare's Sonnets Solved," &c. (Reeves & Co.).—For the multifarious well-meaning persons who set out on the composition of histories of music, or summaries of the art, there lies in wait one pitfall, which few of them manage to avoid. This is the early period of the history, when the data are of the most meagre and untrustworthy kind; we may briefly define it as the

period lying between Tubal Cain and Palestrina. However modest the outside of the history, we know that the bulk of it will be occupied with perfectly useless discussions as to the Greek instruments or the Hebrew scales. When we deduct from the other end of the book the indispensable lucubrations upon the fertile subject of the elevating effect of music, and allow space for the recondite quotations concerning the "Savage Breast," &c., there is generally but little room for the part of musical history that is best worth knowing about, *i.e.* the history of the last three centuries. Of Mr. H. Brown's eighty-six pages, he devotes no less than forty-five to a dissertation on the meaning of all the passages of Scripture in which music is mentioned. We do not for an instant wish to undervalue this part of the subject, but it is evident that it is rather a theme for speculation than for a hand book of history, which this professes to be. The statements made in connection with this branch of his topic are a little vague, and are not of such a character as to warrant us in pinning our faith to Mr. H. Brown's accuracy in matters either of history or grammar. We read, for instance, that "a Greek legend states that Moses taught Orpheus, who was a celebrated poet and musician, said to be the son of Apollo, and the muse Calliope, and, like Moses, to have abided (*sic*) in Egypt and attained all the learning of the priests." At last we come to firm ground on page fifty-six, where the name of Palestrina meets the eye. But by the time page sixty-three is reached, we have traversed all the great schools of music, and are landed in a list of names of living English musicians. In the course of these pregnant seven pages, Mr. H. Brown flits with airy grace from school to school, and gives a word or two to nearly all the greatest names in music, while even finding room for a remark made by the potentate whom he calls "Napoleon I." His power of passing in about three lines from Wagner to St. Fillippo Neri, is equalled if not surpassed by the breadth of musical view which gives rise to the following remark: "Operas in which the highest powers of the musician are displayed, comprise the most elevated, elegant, and mellifluous secular music, and descend to the most grotesque, ridiculous, and absurd forms of musical composition. What a contrast between the refined, chaste style of Bellini, and the loose, flippant, often trifling style of Offenbach (1819-1882)." The peroration of this important section, too, is worthy of quotation. It runs thus: "What reverential thoughts the very names of past celebrities in music awakens (*sic*) in the mind, as of Dr. Bull, Blow, Purcell, with a host of the earlier musicians, and those of recent times, and we must not omit to mention Costa for his oratorio of Eli." We have above indicated the general lines upon which the concluding section is constructed. It confined itself to such axioms as these: that music is a very good thing, that harmony rules all nature, that the human voice is the most perfect of musical organs, and last but not least, that "Females, are not as a rule composers, but executants, the sex though they have not shone as producers of music, admirably render the works not only of the minor, but also of the most exalted masters." The punctuation of Mr. H. Brown has been carefully adhered to. All this together with a great deal of poetry, is to be purchased for eighteen pence, and must be admitted to be cheap at the price.

HENRIETTE ROSSI-SONTAG.

By ADOLPH SCHWARZ.

(From the "Neue Berliner Musikzeitung.")

(Continued from page 343.)

When, in the first half of the forties, Count Rossi, the Sardinian Ambassador, was transferred from St. Petersburg to Berlin, his wife was urgently solicitous that her eldest son, Alexander, who, up to that time, had had a Frenchman as tutor, should for the future be educated according to the principles of German pedagogy. She applied, consequently, to Herr Förster, Aulic counsellor, requesting him to recommend her a German master. Herr Förster went to a friend of his, Professor Michelet, to whose son Lua gave lessons, and talked the matter over with him. Michelet recommended Lua, who in this manner entered Count Rossi's establishment, and began by giving lessons to his eldest son. The boy's mother was nearly always present during the lessons; from time to time the count also appeared, to see what progress the pupil was making. At the

expiration of a year, both the count and countess asked the tutor to undertake the education of the youngest son as well. In reply, Herr Lua directed their attention to a small class he conducted at Professor Michelet's, expressing at the same time a wish for the countess herself to pay it a visit.

Before accepting the proposal, she talked it over with her intimate friend, Madame von M., to whom she was strongly attached by that lady's exceptional mental culture. Untouched by envy, she always admired the elegance and clearness with which her friend expressed herself, qualities enhanced by the wondrous tone of her voice, and with reference to which the countess occasionally remarked, "When Madame von M. is near one in society and has once spoken, I scarcely dare open my mouth."

Anyone who is astonished that the great vocalist should entertain such a feeling of admiration for expression in spoken language, should recollect that our language is a most complicated work of art, and those who are surprised at this remark are in the position of M. Jourdan, in Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, who is astonished "at having spoken prose all his life without having been conscious of the fact."

The two ladies came to the resolution of paying a visit to the little school, and commissioned Herr Lua to inform the professoress. They were informed they would be very welcome, and the visit came off the next day. The capabilities of the scholars were tested in an extemporary examination. The great vivacity exhibited by the boys, who were in high spirits and ruddy with health, excited the countess's liveliest interest.

"That boys so full of life and hearty, and moreover taught by so young a master," she said, "should display vivacity bordering on wildness, I consider very natural; it is wonderful, however, that such vivacity does not overflow and degenerate into licentiousness, but remains within the bounds of order and morality. The merit belongs wholly and solely to the professoress, who, according to all I have heard and seen, watches over the little school with motherly love and care."

The Countess Rossi immediately adopted the notion of establishing such a school herself, and her first care, in order to carry it out, was to obtain pupils. The plan first came into operation with her own son and another boy, the lessons being given alternately at the home of each. At the expiration of a few weeks, Madame von M. also sent her two sons, and the little school soon counted six pupils. As, however, the other parents demanded that the boys should have the lessons in their houses and under their supervision, the little institution became a wandering school, which found every month an asylum in another family.

The countess used to talk a great deal in court circles of the little wandering school which she had called into existence, and was very successful in explaining the method adopted there. In doing this, she exhibited an intimate acquaintance with the various educational systems. When on one occasion, some person expressed astonishment at the knowledge possessed by her on the subject, she observed: "A mother has no other duty than to take measures for the education of her children; all her measures would, however, be useless, if she were to waste time and energy without having any knowledge. The method of instruction adopted in the wandering school possesses this recommendation: it does not by any means seek merely to cram the pupils with knowledge, but, after the Socratic fashion, aims at developing the mental powers and ensuring the complete independence of their young natures. By this means, all feeling of wearisomeness is banished from the course of study. The pupil looks upon the latter as an amusement, whereas it otherwise happens only too often that for a boy of lively temperament the first lessons are something really horrible. My Luigi looks forward eagerly every day to his lessons. No game, no pleasure offered him, causes him to forget when they begin, or would be able to keep him away from them. During the hours of recreation, he usually talks with his father about what he is learning, and, at the table, he not unfrequently manages, by narrating what he himself has done, to make the little wandering school the topic of conversation."

The result of the enthusiasm with which the countess spoke of the school, was that several ladies belonging to the aristocratic circles begged she would allow their children to participate in the course of instruction. Obeying her amiable disposition, and zealous for the

success of the enterprise, she now thought about the ways and means of complying with this wish.

The object she had in view was to increase her wandering school and find permanent quarters for it. After speaking to the other ladies, and winning them over to her views, she announced that she was ready to fit up a class-room in the ambassadorial residence, and supported her proposal on obvious grounds.

"My residence," she said, "is situate in the middle of the town; consequently, none of the boys will find the school too far off. The room which I can give for the purpose is quiet, light, spacious, and seems made for a schoolroom. Moreover, the garden and grounds behind the house offer the boys, during the intervals between the school hours in the fine season, a splendid playground and place for bodily exercise."

It was a fortunate coincidence that the class at Michelet's was broken up, for it enabled the master to devote more time to the other. In short, the countess obtained her object, for the ladies agreed unanimously to her proposal. At her own expense she now had a large table, benches, and a blackboard made; she purchased maps, globes, pictures for ocular instruction, and whatever else was requisite in the way of scholastic apparatus. Under these circumstances it was possible to increase the number of pupils to thirteen.

When the plan of instruction had received the approval of the countess and her husband, the school was opened. The countess had pledged herself to the other ladies that she would superintend it personally, and most conscientiously kept her promise. She appeared nearly every day during school hours, rendered herself intimately acquainted with the progress of the various scholars, and possessed the art of exciting and keeping alive in their parents, with whom she maintained in its interest an active intercourse, the most lively sympathy for the school. In order, however, that they might be able to form by their own experience an opinion as to their children's progress, an examination was held in their presence every two months.

In course of time this examination assumed the character of a family festival. It was held in the large hall of the embassy, and was eagerly attended not only by the scholars' parents and relations, but by the other friends and acquaintances of the house, for, if all went off well, the noble lady-superintendent was accustomed, in response to a request from the master, to sit down at the grand piano and, out of the plentitude of her art, do her very best for the delectation of those present. The latter were always transported with ecstacy, and did not know which they should esteem more highly: the high-placed and honoured artist, or the plain, simple-minded lady who conducted the school.

From time to time a very select audience met in this hall. Thus, on one occasion, in honour of the Duke and Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who were amongst those present, the Radziwill music to Goethe's *Faust* was performed, the Countess Rossi singing the part of Gretchen. The princely composer's son, who, also, was among those present, afterwards said: "I have grown up with the music of my fathers, but never were its spirit and its beauty rendered so clear to me as by the singing of the countess."

In what high esteem the fair artist was held in the only sphere then open to the exercise of her vocal powers, is shown in a poem written by the Crown Prince of Bavaria—afterwards King Max I.—who was at that period studying in Berlin. The royal poet's lines admirably characterise the countess's genius, which lived not only in her singing but lighted up all her surroundings, and was evidenced by the peaceful happiness of her family. It was by her genius she obtained as a husband a gentleman, distinguished by birth as well as by high qualities of both heart and head. Far from weakening the bond which united them, their severest trials appeared only to draw it closer. Lua paints their domestic life as a model life, adding that not only did the children cling to them with intense affection but that they, on their side, were all love to their children.

How practically this perfect lady could think, and how energetically she could act, we perceive from her conduct when the master one day informed her that it was his intention to resign his post in order that he might be able properly to prepare for entering the public service. "You have with us," she remarked on this occasion, "a post such as but seldom probably falls to the lot of a young man who is himself going on with his education. I admit that it is a very humble occupation to teach little boys, but modesty and unassuming

application to work in youthful years are the fundamental conditions for subsequent success in public life. To the instruction you give the boys you have to sacrifice only three short hours a day. Many young men spend this limited time over a glass of beer or at billiards, and yet attain with the greatest comfort to themselves the practical objects of their studies. For the scientific and other studies, which you deem requisite in order that you may, at some future period, be able to undertake an important public duty, employ the time you may have left you every day; it will then be easy for my husband and myself to recommend you, and obtain for you a post with which you will be content."

This advice struck Lua as so sound, that he made up his mind to follow it, and thus "the Countess Rossi's School," by which title the little institution was already pretty well known, continued its course undisturbed. Then came the year '48! The boys assembled for the last time in the forenoon of March 18. What took place in the afternoon and the following night was not without influence on even the little school. When a few boys came as usual the next afternoon, they found several bullets which had flown into the quiet school-room from out the street-conflict which had raged in the neighbourhood of the embassy. There being only so few boys present, the countess did not deem it advisable to do any lessons. The next day it was known that several boys belonging to the class had left Berlin with their parents. The lessons were in consequence temporarily suspended. Week after week and month after month passed by without there being any prospect of reopening the school; on the contrary, one day a report was spread about that the Sardinian embassy at the Court of Prussia would be abolished, and that Count Rossi would break up his establishment at Berlin.

In an interview which Lua had a short time afterwards with the countess, he learned that the report was correct. The lady was extremely agitated, and said, with tears streaming down her cheeks: "It is all over with our school. That Luigi will study any more, I do not believe; all prospect of his doing so has vanished. If, in these sad times, he becomes a carpenter, or any other good workman, we ought to be contented, and thank God for it. How happy I should be if I had a little bit of ground as large as this apartment, where I could grow my own potatoes and live in peace."

The mental depression which overpowered the sorely tried lady, when so violently assailed by so many misfortunes, soon yielded, however, to the heroism with which she overcame all that then filled her heart with so much anxiety—overcoming it by the omnipotence of her love as a wife and a mother.

The unfavourable financial circumstances of the amiable but thoughtless count, who could not restrain his passion for play, had long been known. To this was added the subversion of the established order of things in the political world, as well as eventually the imminent drying up—by the loss of his official appointment—of the count's only source of income. A catastrophe was to be expected in a very short time. Then it was that the countess's talent which had remained unimpaired, or rather had actually become more fully developed, by time, was destined to become the sheet anchor of the entire family.

How this came about we learn from Benjamin Lumley's "Reminiscences of the Opera," in which the author enters into a detailed account of the efforts by which he restored the fair artist to the stage.

When Jenny Lind carried out her intention of retiring from the boards, thereby plunging her manager, Lumley, into a state of great embarrassment, that gentleman conceived the notion, previously entertained by him, of inducing the Countess Rossi to resume her theatrical career.

"For some time past," he writes, "I had conceived hopes, from certain rumours which had reached my ears, that the Countess Rossi, the once admired Madlle. Sontag, the precursor of Jenny Lind in a previous generation, the adored of all *dilettanti*, might be induced, in spite of her high position as wife of the Sardinian envoy at the Court of Berlin, to return to the stage. A generation, it is true, had already passed away since the Sontag had taken her leave of an English public on the boards of the then 'King's Theatre.' But I had learnt, on the most reliable authority, that, in spite of time, and absence from the exercise of her profession, the voice of the Countess Rossi was as brilliant, as fresh, as pure, as it had been more than

twenty years ago; that her marvellous execution was unchanged; that her personal appearance, although she had been for so many years a wife and a mother, had lost but little of that charm of beauty and grace which had exercised so great a fascination over all hearts in times gone by. That such should be the case amounted to the marvellous and incredible. But I had faith; and, strange to tell, that faith was based upon a true and solid foundation. Madlle. Sontag was, then, my next 'card'; but the hindrances to this my newly-conceived project were great; the diplomatic manoeuvres to be spun, unravelled, and finally woven into a tangible web, were delicate and difficult of handling."

The negotiations conducted in Berlin by the Earl of Westmoreland, the English Ambassador there, actually did fail, and the flattering offer was at first declined with the remark that all idea of accepting it was out of the question, "as the Ambassador had from the outset declared he was well aware it would be." But Lumley still had an ally in Berlin, and where a nobleman could do nothing, an artist might prevail. Sigismund Thalberg undertook the negotiation, and as early as April, 1849, wrote to say that at least the idea *was* entertained, and that there was every hope of eventual success, as, in consequence of the economy which had become a necessity for Sardinia, Count Rossi would probably have to leave the public service, and his wife, for the sake of the future fortunes of her children be compelled to return to the stage. Of course, the negotiations were carried on with the strictest secrecy, but the terms and the parts to be sustained by the lady were settled. The matter, however, was still spun out, because the varying relations of the count to his government at one time seemed to give hope of his retaining his appointment, while at another they appeared to indicate he would have to retire. At last, on June 9, Lumley received a letter informing him that all obstacles were removed, and that the countess would be in London by the end of the month.

An arrangement was forthwith concluded for the remainder of 1849 and the season of 1850, and shortly afterwards it was announced that "Henrietta Sontag," the celebrated prima donna, was about to return to the stage, after an absence of twenty-one years. Received with indescribable enthusiasm, the fair artist at first well nigh lost all self-command; but a glance at the box in which her husband and children were seated, restored her self-possession. She speedily overcame her agitation and thoroughly entered into her artistic task.

(To be continued.)

Poetry.

A LAMENT.

The sun lay dying o'er the moor:
We stood beside the mill,
And watched the last rays kiss the stream
That wanders neath the hill.
We vowed the vows that lovers use,
And kissed as lovers kiss,
And in our hearts the dying sun
Was a rising sun of bliss.

To-night, alone upon the hill
I watch the sunset die,
The land is just as peaceful now
As in the days gone by;
But o'er my heart there is a shade,
That was not there of yore—
For though the sun will rise again,
Dead love can rise no more.

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ALICE COMYNS CARR.

Occasional Notes.

Mr. Cowen's Festival Overture written for the Liverpool Exhibition was, as we state elsewhere, included in the programme of the fifth Richter Concert, and proved upon the whole well worthy of a place in such surroundings. The merit of the work placed in a light all the more glaring the official brutality of the Mayor of Liverpool, who, as is credibly reported, stopped Mr. Cowen and his orchestra in the middle of the piece, because it delayed other and more important portions of the ceremony. In a musically civilized country, such an act of Vandalism would have been punished by hooting, tarring and feathering, or the bastinado, as the case might be. The Mayor of Liverpool arose a knighted Mayor—a nightmare, Mr. Punch would say—immediately after his feat of valour.

In the log of their cruise in H.M.S. Bacchante, which the young princes have just published, there occurs a description of a Japanese concert, which we have much pleasure in quoting:—"During dinner the Mikado sent his private band, the Reijin, to play on old Japanese, Chinese, and Korean instruments, most of them over 1,500 years old; it is a very rare performance, and the only place you can hear it is in the Emperor's palace. The sounds that proceeded from the inner room where these musicians were placed were so faint and plaintive that some of the party ignorantly mistook them for preparations of a band tuning up, and as it went on for some time enquired when they were going to begin to play. The music, in fact, like all oriental music to a western ear, appears altogether out of tune and full of discords, being set in a wholly different key, and seeming to speak a wholly different language to our own. But, after listening to it attentively for some time, although we cannot say we like it, yet we can quite understand how some people do, just as others admire Whistler's pictures or a piece of faded old silk work, or the faint flavour or smell of some, to our taste, sickly flower or fruit."

These remarks are both modest and sensible. Of the crowds which visited the Health Exhibition to eat a Chinese dinner and listen to a Chinese concert, by far the majority preferred the dinner to the concert, for the reason probably that while the former was in reality made up of the French cuisine with a few Celestial dishes superadded, the latter undoubtedly represented the genuine article. These melodies sounded weird and inharmonious to western ears; and western minds, too much accustomed to measure everything by the standard of their own taste, were apt to look upon Chinese music as a confused mass of noise, without tonal system or melodious sequence. Such people, acting on the comfortable principle, *omne ignotum pro risibili*, laughed at what they could not understand and went on their way. The young princes showed more intelligence than this. They probably had never heard of Mr. Van Aalst's learned work on Chinese music, showing that the tonal system used by that nation and by the Japanese is the growth of ages, and intimately connected with the mysteries of Buddhism. But they evidently felt that they were in the presence of something logically consistent with itself, albeit, different from our own ideas.

"Last night, at the National English Opera House, the 500th performance ofs opera the '.....,' was made the occasion for a unique entertainment in honour of our great English composer. Around his bust were assembled the principal artists of the theatre, dressed in costumes of

the characters of some of his most celebrated operas. The stage was gay with flowers, wreaths, and palm-trees. Verses written expressly for the occasion by the laureate were recited by Mrs. and the veteran tenor, Mr., and a selection from various works of the composer was given by the leading members of the company."

The question, when the time will come to make the above statement a reality, and to fill up the blanks with the names of artists possibly unborn at this moment, may have suggested itself to the minds of some who read the account of the celebration given at the Paris Grand Opera, in honour of Halévy, the other night, when *La Juive* was played for the 500th time. The scene, which is described as a brilliant and enthusiastic one, derived additional interest from the appearance upon the platform of his former triumphs, of the veteran Duprez, who, in connection with Lasalle, recited *vers d'occasion* written by Edward Blau. It cannot be said that "they do these things better in France," for in England they do not do them at all.

The performance of *Mors et Vita* in Paris, under Gounod's direction, was repeated on Sunday, when the vocal quartet consisted again of Mesdames Krauss and Conneau, Mr. Lloyd and M. Faure. The impartial accounts of the first performance which are to hand are tolerably unanimous as to the impression which the work has made. On the favourable side must be discounted the inspiring presence of the composer, and on the unfavourable, the abominable acoustics of the Trocadéro and the very indifferent singing of the chorus, which, it is said, had been put out of temper by some very severe remarks made by Gounod at the last rehearsal. The general result seems to have been very similar to that of most English performances. The Requiem Mass was found dull and heavy in spite of detached beauties, while on the other hand the magnificent orchestral piece, and the chorus "Sedenti in throno," proclaiming the advent of the Judge in the second part, made an overpowering impression. We have frequently pointed out the beauty of this piece, coupling it with the lovely tune "Beati qui lavant," of which, however, the Parisian critics, as far as we are aware, make no special mention.

One of these worthies, M. Arthur Pougin, commits himself to the following statement: "As to the English tenor, Mr. Lloyd, who has crossed the Channel specially to sing *Mors et Vita*, it seems to me that he might have saved himself that trouble. Not that Mr. Lloyd is an artist without merit, but his voice is short, flaccid, and without resonance (*courte, plate, et sans timbre*), and one might without difficulty have found a local singer quite capable of performing the task in an equally satisfactory manner." We should just like to hear that local singer. Why does not he take the trouble of crossing the Channel to our side and give us the benefit of his voice? Only let him leave his excessive tremolo behind him. In the meantime we have no doubt that Mr. Lloyd is tremulous in his shoes at the advent of so dangerous a rival.

A story of the *Poisson d'avril* (in English, "cock and bull") kind, comes from Paris, where one Dr. Sandras is said to have invented a method for tuning the human voice just as you would tune a fiddle. It is all done by means of inhalation, *Eau de Bottot* and a preparation of tar, being the chief ingredients used. It is stated that twelve inhalations are sufficient to entirely alter the voice and to extend its compass over three octaves. What next? asks the student, already bewildered by the conflicting claims of different "methods" and concentrated Italian air.

CARL ROSA OPERA COMPANY.

AUGUSTUS HARRIS begs to announce the engagement of Mr. CARL ROSA'S COMPANY for the production of English Operas, under their joint management, during a season of four weeks.—Monday, June 7, *Carmen*; Tuesday, production of A. C. Mackenzie's new opera, *The Troubadour*. Libretto by Dr. Hueffer. Mr. Leslie Crotty, Mr. Barrington Foote, Mr. Henry Beaumont, Mr. Barton McCuckin, Miss Marion Burton, Miss Vadini, and Madame Alwina Valleria (conducted by the composer); Wednesday, *Maritana*; Thursday, *Nadeshda*; Friday, *Faust*; Saturday Morning, at two, *Carmen*; Saturday evening, *The Troubadour*. Popular price. No restriction as to evening dress.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA, COVENT GARDEN.---This (Saturday) Evening, *Un Ballo in Maschera* (first time since 1878). Madame De Cepeda, Mdlle. Giulia Vaida (her first appearance in England), Madame Scalchi; Signor D'Andrade and Signor Gayarré. Conductor, Signor Bevignani.—Box Office open daily from 10 till 5.

DINORAH, TUESDAY, June 8.—Mdlle. ELIA RUSSELL and Madame SCALCHI; Signor Marini and Signor D'Andrade.

MADAME ALBANI will make her second appearance this season on THURSDAY, June 10, in a Favourite Opera.

RICHTER CONCERTS.—ST. JAMES'S HALL.—The Sixth and Seventh Concerts of the Season will take place on Monday, June 7, and Thursday, June 10, 1886, at Eight o'clock. GRAND WAGNER NIGHTS.

PROGRAMME:—The entire 2nd Act from *Tristan und Isolde* and almost the entire 3rd Act from *Siegfried* (meeting between Siegfried and Brünnhilde). Isolde and Brünnhilde, Fräulein Theresa Malten (of the Royal Opera at Dresden); Tristan and Siegfried, Herr Heinrich Gudehus (of the Royal Opera at Dresden); Brangäne, Fräulein Pauline Cramer; Marke, Mr. Georg Henschel; Melot, Herr Georg Ritter.

Sofa Stalls, 15/- Stalls or Balcony Stalls, 10/6. Balcony (Unreserved), 5/- Area or Gallery, 2/5.

SIGNOR CARLO DUCCI will give a GRAND MATINÉE MUSICALE on Saturday Afternoon, June 12, 1886, at Three o'clock, at 1, Prince of Wales' Terrace, Kensington Palace (by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Sarjant Cochrane), when he will be assisted by eminent artists.—Tickets, One Guinea, to be had of Signor DUCCI, 25, Princes Street, Cavendish Square.

MR. JOHN L. CHILD.

MR. JOHN L. CHILD (late of Mr. Irving's Lyceum Company) has the honour to announce that his Fourth and Last Dramatic and Miscellaneous Recital will take place on Saturday Evening, JUNE 19, at Three o'clock. Tickets and full particulars of Messrs. CHAPPELL & Co., 50, New Bond Street; and usual Agents.

MRS. M. A. CARLISLE has the honour to announce her Annual Matinée Musicale on Friday, June 25, at 2.30 p.m. at the Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, when she will be assisted by eminent artists, and offers a varied and attractive programme.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS.—Advertisements should be sent not later than 5 o'clock on Wednesdays, to the Office, at Messrs. MALLETT & Co.'s, 68 & 70, Wardour Street, London, W. Telephone No. 3849. Telegraphic address: "ASMAI," London.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.—The Subscription to THE MUSICAL WORLD is now reduced to 17s. 6d. per annum (payable in advance).

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1886.

RUBINSTEIN'S EDUCATIONAL MISSION.

To tack an educational purpose on to a series of concerts is very nearly as bad as appending a moral to a story-book; but, though we do not wish to imply the absence of any other element than that of improvement, it is quite certain that a special educational value attaches to the set of pianoforte

recitals which is just being brought to a close by the distinguished visitor who has succeeded Liszt as public lion. It is not merely due to the arrangement of his programmes, though this contributes in no small degree to the general result, but to causes of a purely artistic kind. If it were possible, by means of some highly developed phonograph to place upon record the exact rendering of pianoforte compositions, as played by any of the greatest artists, we should not hesitate to choose Rubinstein's interpretation of nearly all that he plays, to serve as an ultimate standard. From an educational point of view it will be agreed on all hands that his most valuable performances are those of old-fashioned works. Almost every item of the first recital, when the development of the pianoforte was traced through its ancestors, the virginals, the clavicord, and the harpsichord, was played in a manner which one would gladly have perpetuated for the instruction of future performers for all time. It is his interpretation of this class of music that constitutes his most valid claim to a supreme rank among pianists, and the self-control whereby he, as it were, dispenses with all the most characteristic resources of the later instrument, and confines himself within the limitations of its forerunners, is perhaps the surest token of his power. We are inclined to assign the highest place to this section of his performances, because the student who should slavishly copy his reading of the works of the old masters would be perfectly justified in so doing, whereas the same proceeding, if applied to some of the more modern compositions, would be fraught with grievous danger.

The use of such cautious phrases as "nearly all that he plays," is consequent upon the appearance of a certain phenomenon that is to be observed at every recital. In the case of many great *virtuosi*, purists and sticklers for absolute accuracy regard with dissatisfaction the reading of some passage here and there, which offends them at each recurrence. In the case of Rubinstein, all possible objections are confined to one particular movement, on the devoted head of which all the artist's least agreeable idiosyncrasies seem to have been piled. For example, in one of the variations of "The Harmonious Blacksmith," in the finale of the "Moonlight" sonata, and in one or two numbers of Schumann's "Carnaval," the speed adopted, impossible even for Rubinstein, disfigured the interpretation of the works to an extent that was to be deeply regretted. To the ordinary listener this makes but little difference, and the fault is readily forgiven if it is observed, in consideration of the enchanting rendering of such pieces as Mozart's Fantasia in C, Beethoven's last sonata, or Schumann's little "Vogel als Prophet." But from the educational point of view—and it must be remembered that we are considering the artist from that point of view alone—the defect we have spoken of is to be deplored.

The educational value of the second and subsequent recitals was of a different and a higher kind from that of the first, for it is only a very advanced student who can profit by an example he is not intended to copy as nearly as he can. The chief marvel of the Beethoven recital was not the mere committal to memory of the eight sonatas, or their correct performance, but the fact, that although not one single page was

played with complete observation of the composer's marks of expression, many being represented by their exact opposite, yet it was impossible not to feel that Beethoven himself would have justified the proceeding, if he had been present in the flesh, for that the spirit of the player was in sympathy with his own. But for every whipper-snapper of a pianoforte student to go home and turn all Beethoven's *ff* marks into *pp* simply because Rubinstein does so, would be little short of blasphemy. When he is as great as Rubinstein, he may take as great liberties with the text, but not before.

Hitherto we have considered only the interpretation of the music as material for instruction; but a very important quality in Rubinstein's playing, and one which the student may be safely recommended to copy—if he can—is the power of gradation in force of sound. The full, round, singing tone of the fortissimo passages, produced without the slightest harshness, is not less wonderful than the delicacy, evenness, and clearness of the pianissimos; and these extremes are all the more effective from the rareness with which they are used. The shades of tone that lie between are one and all remarkable, each in its way, and the task of imitating the most commonplace of them is enough to distract even an advanced student.

To refer to all the ways in which instruction can be obtained from hearing this great artist would be obviously impossible in a limited space; but there is one source from which no instruction worth the name will be derived, and that is the collective programme for all seven recitals. We have not seen the original German of Herr Oscar Eichberg, but if the English, after deducting all the peculiarities of Mr. Prince's diction, and his manifold and obvious mistakes, may be held to represent the original, we cannot say much for it on the score of accuracy, or on any other ground. There is one sentence, now famous among the frequenters of the cycle of recitals, that may be laid before our readers, in case any of them should care to exercise their skill in deciphering its meaning:—"Perhaps Schumann would never have dreamt of any great literary work, had he not felt himself called to defend, against anything Philistine, and to lead into action ideas both liberal and new and anything tending in the same direction." Yet even this book may be turned to an educational use, for it would be good practice for any student of musical history to correct all the inaccuracies of dates, and for the learner of English grammar to reconstruct the sentences.

Correspondence.

ACCENT ? QUANTITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR.—It is a matter of common observation that a convert is generally an extremist, and Mr. Verrall's judicious comments upon my somewhat bold statements on the subject of Greek accents, prove me to be no exception to the rule. At Marlborough and Oxford I followed without questioning that method of pronouncing Greek of which it has been pointedly said 'that it enables Englishmen to speak Greek so that they can understand one another, which nobody else can.' About four years ago a relative rendered conversant by residence in the South East of Europe with modern

Greek, induced me to turn my attention to that language as the easiest to be acquired, and most useful passport in case of my paying him a visit. The result has been, apart from the fresh impulse given to my study of a language which nine men out of ten drop on leaving the University, and the acquirement in the space of a few months, of more accuracy in writing the accents than a dozen years at school and college had hitherto given me—that having got into the habit of reading Greek, ancient and modern, with the accent and intonation employed by the Greeks of to-day, I have come to realize in my own person the experience of the late Mr. Geldart who felt absolutely unable "to tolerate either Homer or Xenophon or Sophocles read with the Latin accent and the mis-called Erasmian pronunciation." In consequence of the adoption of this attitude I have hardly ever failed to avail myself of the slenderest excuse for ventilating my grievance, even at the risk of repelling your readers by the intrusion of a topic which they may not unwarrantably consider unsuitable for discussion in the columns of *The Musical World*, at the risk too, as events have proved, of engaging in a controversy with so decidedly distinguished a scholar as Mr. A. W. Verrall. But although I am ready to admit that my remarks lend themselves to a construction which it would be difficult to maintain, and that the adoption of the modern method of pronunciation at the performance of the Eumenides music, while satisfying the demands of a few fanatics like myself, would have been denounced as absurd by the great majority of scholars present, I would nevertheless venture to take exception to one or two remarks in Mr. Verrall's interesting letter. He says "If the music had been written on the assumption that the Greek 'accents' marked the stress of the rhythm, it might have satisfied 'the educated Greeks of to-day,' but would assuredly have been condemned by most students of the ancient language." My words were to the effect that—"Dr. Stanford had faithfully followed the quantitative rules of metre to the absolute neglect of the accentual stress," but I had no intention of implying, as Mr. Verrall seems to think, that he should have followed the accent to the absolute neglect of the laws of scansion, my view of the matter being best expressed in the words of Mr. Geldart that "what has been called the clashing of the accentual with the quantitative beat constitutes the real beauty of quantitative measure." I was merely pleading for a certain degree of consideration for the accentual beat—I withdraw the obnoxious word *stress*—not for according it the undivided preference now bestowed on its rival, the quantitative beat. As to the number of those in favour of or against reading Greek according to accent, I am not in a position to pronounce a definite opinion, but I find it difficult to reconcile the statement of Mr. Verrall with the deliberate assertion of Mr. Geldart that "few have ever questioned, I may say among continental scholars no one has ever doubted, the propriety of reading Greek according to the accent." I may be wrong but it seems to me that Mr. Verrall is rather unfair to the "educated Greek," whose view of the matter is, perhaps unintentionally, contrasted with that of "students of the ancient language." When we consider that modern Greek "differs less in its grammatical forms from the Greek of the Homeric rhapsodists of nearly three milleniums ago, than the language of an educated contemporary Englishman differs from that of Chaucer only half a millenium ago" [Greek Folk Songs, J. Stuart-Glennie, Preface p. xxiv]; is there not a strong presumption that these same modern Greeks should know more about the pronunciation of the ancient form of their own tongue than English students thereof? Some Germans have gone as far as saying that only they can understand Shakspeare properly, but they have not yet formulated a theory for the pronunciation of Chaucer differing radically from that adopted by "educated Englishmen" of to-day.

In support of the view that the "stress" in Greek lyric verse must have in the main corresponded with that adopted by Dr. Stanford, Mr. Verrall adduces the fact that "the Latin poets whose system of stress we know, read the Greek metres in respect of stress much in the same way as ourselves." This I cannot regard as a very convincing argument. Would the English people be prepared, say in the year 4400 A.D., to accept a theory of reading the lyric poetry of the Victorian era, founded upon allusions in contemporary French records, although that theory conflicted with their own insular view of the subject? I find a further reason for refusing to regard Mr. Verrall's argument as satisfactory in the pages of that authority to whom I have already so frequently referred—Mr. Geldart—who

traces the origin of the conflict between accent and quantity to the fallacious application of the Latin law of accent to Greek. I feel I have already trespassed too far on your space, but before I conclude, let me mention one curious instance of the survival of accentuated pronunciation, a triumph over insular prejudice, probably due to the religious associations of the phrase—I mean the invocation *Kyrie eléison*. Now if we were only consistent we should say *Kewriey elééison*. As it is however, the insular Briton and the modern Greek are at one in the matter. After all, this is probably only because the words are almost invariably seen in the character of the vernacular and not in Greek letters. If we were familiar with them in the latter form this refreshing and encouraging inconsistency would have long ceased to exist.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

THE CORRESPONDENT IN QUESTION.

"Musical World" Stories.

A WILD PIGEON CHASE.

BY ALEXANDER DUMAS (THE ELDER).

(Continued from page 348.)

"I mean that we are on our estate, and henceforth you may give your orders like a queen."

"Then my orders are that I shall be left alone in one room, for I do not wish to show myself to my subjects. . . . What is our mansion called?"

"Anticoli."

"Well I should frighten my Anticolian subjects in my present get up."

"Civetta," said the captain, with a smile.

"Be off. A quarter of an hour and I am ready," Zephirine put us out of the room and shut herself in.

"So you own a mansion, captain?" said I.

"In a way," replied he.

"Your own?"

"Oh, no, not my own! You see the government would take that amiss. But it belongs to a Roman nobleman, who lends it me, and I pay him a small rent. The worthy gentleman's official duties keep him in town, and he must make some use of his country house."

"Then we shall be like a cock in paste."

"I don't understand," said the captain.

"Of course not. The phrase is a little too idiomatic for a foreigner. I mean we shall do splendidly."

"Splendidly! it's the very word. We may have to fire a shot or two, occasionally; but that is all in the day's business."

"May I venture to remind you that I enlisted merely as a violinist?"

"Then what is the meaning of that gun and that game bag that you claimed as yours?"

"Certainly, they belong to me. And, by the way, is there good shooting on your estate?"

"Magnificent!"

"What sort of game?"

"All sorts."

"Have you any wild pigeons?"

"Swarms!"

"Then, captain, leave the game department to me."

"Very well, I will give you three or four of my fellows as beaters, and you shall shoot to your heart's content."

"You made another promise, captain."

"What about?"

"My hundred crowns."

"So I did. Picard, see that our friend's money is given back to him."

"Upon my word, captain, I can't make out why people are so hard upon you. You are the most honest bandit of my acquaintance."

"Ecco mi!" said Zephirine, as she re-entered.

"Already!" said the captain.

"Oh, I am quick at my work. I have had time enough to do what I wanted."

"Bravo! Then we'll be off again."

"I am ready," said Zephirine.

"The captain opened the window."

"Forward!" he cried.

"Zephirine had time to give me a look, and showed me my ring. I understood then what she had been doing in the room."

"We started at about two. At four we reached the bank of a little river. The captain called the ferryman by name. He ran towards us with an alacrity that testified to his recognition of the voice that summoned him."

"As we were crossing the captain and the boatman talked together in a low voice."

"What's the matter?" asked Miss Zephirine, with well-feigned anxiety, 'has our mansion walked off?'

"Not at all," said the captain, 'and in a quarter of an hour I hope we shall be in it.'

"Thank goodness," she replied, 'we have been exploring the country long enough.'

"We came into an avenue of poplars at the end of which was the gate of a splendid country house. The captain rang, the porter came to the gate."

"No sooner did he recognize the captain than he struck the bell in a peculiar way, and some half dozen servants instantly ran forward."

"The captain seemed to be extremely welcome, for there was great rejoicing among all the household when his arrival was known. The captain received all these demonstrations as homage to which he was well accustomed."

"Good, good," said he, 'go before us and light the way.'

"The servants obeyed. One of them wanted to take my violin, no doubt with the best intentions, but as it was an excellent instrument I would not trust him with it. A little altercation ensued, and was terminated by Picard, who knocked the servant down, so I was left in possession of my violin, which I had determined to bring back with me to France, if kind fate should ever permit me to return."

"We were each taken to our respective rooms."

"It was a palace, M. Dumas, a regular palace. A room full of magnificent frescoes fell to my lot. It is true my door opened into the great hall, so that I could neither leave nor enter without passing some half dozen retainers, who at first sight looked to me like genuine brigands disguised as valets."

"You can no doubt imagine, sir, what a state I was in; indeed, I was just going to ring and ask whether I could borrow some clothes, when a servant entered with linen, stockings, shoes, half-a-dozen pairs of breeches, several coats, and any number of overcoats, and asked me to select such as suited my figure or my inclination. I shuddered, sir, to think that all these were doubtless my neighbour's goods, so I contented myself with a greatcoat, a coat, two pairs of breeches, and six shirts. I couldn't have been more moderate. Before he left me, the servant opened a door which led into a bath-room, and informed me that dinner would be *alle vintidue*. After numerous explanations, I understood this to signify that dinner would be from six to seven o'clock. I have never understood what number twenty-two could have to do with it."

"I had only just time enough to dress for dinner. Luckily I found all that I required ready laid out for me upon the toilet-table, and among other things some excellent English razors, which I have often regretted, for I have never had such good ones since."

"Just as I completed my toilet, the bell rang for dinner, so I gave a finishing touch to my hair and left my room, taking the key in my pocket lest anyone should meddle with my violin. At the door I found a servant waiting to lead me to the drawing-room."

"There I found a young nobleman, a young lady, and a French officer had arrived before me. I thought I had made some mistake, and was about to withdraw, but just as I was retiring backwards, and stepping on the footman's toes, the young lady called out—"

"Well, M. Louet, what on earth are you about? Won't you dine with me?"

"I beg your pardon, Miss," I said. 'I did not recognize you.'

"If you prefer it, M. Louet," said the young lord; 'you can have dinner sent up into your room.'

"Why, is that you, captain?"

"M. Dumas I felt quite bewildered.

"Oh, M. Louet would not be so unkind as to deprive us of his company," said the officer, bowing.

"I turned towards him to make some suitable reply to his politeness. M. Dumas, it was the lieutenant. There had been a transformation like Cinderella's.

"Al suo comodo," said a servant, as he threw open the folding doors of the dining room.

"May I ask without seeming impertinent, what that means?" said I to the lieutenant.

"That means, my dear sir, that dinner is ready."

"The captain gave his arm to Miss Zephirine, and the lieutenant and I followed.

"In a brilliantly lighted room a splendid dinner had been served.

"I do not know whether my cook will meet with your approval M. Louet," said the captain, taking his seat and showing me mine. "He is French, and is considered pretty good. I told him to cook a few Provençal dishes in your honour."

"With garlic in them? Oh, for shame," said the French officer, taking a pinch of perfumed snuff from a gold snuff-box.

"M. Dumas, I felt as if it were all a happy dream.

"I was helped to soup.

"Why," I exclaimed, "its bouillabaisse!"

"It was indeed, sir; and what is more, it was made to perfection.

"You have had a look at the park, M. Louet?" said the captain.

"Yes, your excellency," I replied, "from my bed-room window."

"They tell me it is full of game. We must investigate that point to-morrow, M. Louet. You have promised to supply us with game."

"And I renew my promise, captain. Only I must beg of you to let me have back my gun. You see I am used to it, and I can't shoot with any other."

"That's a bargain," said the captain.

"By the way. You know we dine early to-morrow, Tonino, and you promised to take me to the Valle Theatre. I am curious to see the wretched little dancer who has taken my place."

"But, my darling," said the captain, "there is no performance to-morrow—only the day after. Besides, I am not sure that the carriage is in working order. I will see to that. So never mind. Meanwhile, if you would like a ride to-morrow to Tivoli or Subiaco—"

"Will you join our party, M. Louet?" asked Zephirine.

"No thank you," I replied, "I am not accustomed to riding, so that really it is no pleasure to me to be on horseback. Besides, as the captain has made me the offer, I shall shoot. I am a sportsman before everything."

"Please yourself, my dear fellow, you have full liberty."

"I will keep M. Louet company," said the lieutenant, "I will go shooting with him."

"You do me too much honour, sir," I replied, bowing.

"So it was settled that next day the captain and Miss Zephirine would take a ride to Subiaco, and the lieutenant and I should stop at the chateau for some shooting.

"After dinner the captain left the lieutenant and me at liberty to do what we liked. We did not fail to profit by it: for I in particular had been leading a very anxious and most fatiguing existence for the last fifteen or eighteen days.

"So I went to my room. Judge of my surprise when I found my gun in one corner, my game-bag in another, and my hundred crowns upon the mantel-piece. That convinced me that in Captain Tonino's premises the doors could be opened without keys.

"While I was undressing, the cook whom I had complimented on the bouillabaisse came to enquire whether I would rather have a Provençal, a French or an Italian breakfast, as Count Villaforte had given orders, in view of our proposed day's shooting, that I should have breakfast in my own room.

"It appeared that Captain Tonino when he changed his costume had also thought fit to change his name.

"I again complimented the cook and asked him to let me have a chicken fried in oil, commonly called chicken à la Provençale. It is my favourite dish, sir. I slept well, so well that I was only waked by the breakfast knocking at my door.

"M. Dumas, I breakfasted like a king.

"I was finishing my cup of chocolate when I felt a tap on the shoulder. I turned round. It was the lieutenant, irreproachably got up in shooting costume.

"There," said he, "that's the way we keep our appointments."

"I begged a thousand pardons. But I pointed out that I could never go out shooting in knee breeches. Thereupon he pointed to a costume like his own that was lying ready for me on a sofa.

"I was a second Aladdin, sir. I had only to form a wish to have it gratified.

"In a moment I was ready, and we went downstairs. At the door some servants were holding four saddle horses; one for the captain, one for Miss Zephirine, and the two others for two grooms.

"The captain came downstairs just at the same time as we. He placed in the holsters a brace of double-barrelled pistols; the two grooms who were to accompany him did likewise. Moreover, both master and servants were attired in a sort of fancy costume, which enabled them to wear a hunting knife. The captain saw that I noticed all these precautions.

"It can't be helped, my dear fellow," said he; "the police is so imperfect in these parts that one is never safe from unpleasant adventures. It is as well to be armed, you understand."

"I did not understand at all. Quite the contrary. Either I had been dreaming, or I was dreaming now. Was the captain an illusion, or Count Villaforte? Which was the reality? That was exactly what I couldn't determine, so I resolved to let matters take their course.

"As for Miss Zephirine, she was bewitching as an Amazon.

"A pleasant day to you, M. Louet," said the captain, as he mounted his horse. "We shall be back in four hours. I hope you will have done your shooting by that time."

"I hope so, too, count," I replied, "though shooting is a most uncertain game. One never knows what may come of it."

"At all events," said the captain, spurring his horse to make it curvet, "at all events, Beaumanoir, I leave M. Louet in your hands."

"Never fear, count," said the lieutenant.

"And once more shaking us by the hand, Miss Zephirine and he set off, followed by the grooms.

"I beg your pardon," I said, approaching the lieutenant, "it is you, I believe, that the count addressed as Beaumanoir?"

"Yes. It is I."

"I thought the family of Beaumanoir was extinct?"

"Well, I have restored it, that's all!"

"You have a perfect right to do so, sir. Pray pardon me if I have been indiscreet."

"Oh, don't mention it, M. Louet. Would you like a dog, or not?"

"I would rather do without one, sir. The last dog I had insulted me cruelly; and I would not like the same thing to happen again."

"As you please—Gaetan, loose Romeo."

"We set out. In my first six shots, sir, I killed four chastres, which proves that the Marseilles bird must have been bewitched. Beaumanoir laughed very much at this.

"You don't mean to say you take a pleasure in killing such game as that?"

(To be continued.)

Opera.

CARL ROSA OPERA COMPANY.

The opening of Mr. Carl Rosa's English opera season on Monday night was an event of more than ordinary importance, and as such it was recognized by a brilliant audience which filled Drury Lane Theatre from floor to ceiling. English music, and more especially English opera, has for years been regarded as the Cinderella of arts in the country of its birth. Fashionable persons were too apt to look upon it as an inferior thing when compared with its Italian sister, and had it not been for the energy and indomitable courage of Mr. Carl Rosa, who is an artist and an enthusiast as well as a man of business,

this country alone among musical nations would have had no musical drama of its own. For the first time since its existence his opera company has ventured to come to London during the season proper, and to enter into competition with the foreign singers at Covent Garden. There is no reason why this rivalry should not be a friendly one, or why the two operas should not assist rather than injure one another, London is surely large enough to support two institutions both of which have their special claims to the attention of every cultured amateur. The strong points of our national opera were placed in a favourable light by the performance of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which had been selected for the opening night. Even at the best Italian rendering of that work English people do not realize that a comedy of the first order as well as a musical masterpiece is set before them. The music of Mozart is duly appreciated, but the wit and the dramatic aptitude of Beaumarchais, from whom the Italian librettist drew his inspiration, are too geneally neglected. This is different at Drury Lane. The artists, knowing that their language is understood of the people, pronounce their words distinctly; they act as well as sing. They are aided moreover by the intelligent stage management of Mr. Augustus Harris, who knows, if anyone does how to give point to the striking situations in which Beaumarchais's design abounds. The musical *ensemble* attained by the Carl Rosa Company is proverbial. Singing together for the greater part of the year these artists know each other's idiosyncrasies; they feel that they are parts of a pictorial composition from which no single figure must stand out with undue prominence. A well-trained chorus and an excellent orchestra, conducted by Mr. Rosa in person, also co-operated in making Monday night's performance one harmonious whole from beginning to end. The cast was a very efficient one, and with the exception of Mr. Sauvage, who neither acted nor sang Count Almaviva with sufficient distinction, no serious fault could be found with it. Madame Burns as the Countess sang her great air *Dove sono* in a manner which it would be difficult to match on any stage for beauty of voice and intelligence of phrasing, and Madame Julia Gaylord made a charming *pièce de genre* of Susanna. Miss Marion Burton's Cherubino was one of the chief successes of the evening, her "Voi che sapete" positively electrifying the house. Her acting, though lively and amusing, requires toning down. Her exaggerated tenderness in the scene with Susanna bordered on burlesque, so did her boyish awkwardness when Cherubino first appears dressed as a girl. So clever an artist need merely realize her faults to remedy them. Very praiseworthy was the Figaro of Mr. Barrington Foote, whose dramatic capabilities have considerably increased since last we saw him, and whose organ is sonorous and sympathetic. Mr. Lyall drew a characteristic sketch of Don Basilio, and other minor parts were well filled. The attitude of the public was enthusiastic throughout the evening. All the artists were warmly applauded, and Mr. Rosa received an ovation on his appearance at the conductor's desk.

The performance of Massenet's *Manon* on Tuesday night was in many respects an improvement upon that of *Figaro*. It will be remembered that the English version of the French composer's work from the pen of Mr. J. Bennett, was produced by Mr. Rosa last season with a success scarcely less decided than that which had accompanied its performance in Paris. In Madame Marie Roze an excellent counterpart of the heroine has been found. If the character had been designed for her it could not fit her more perfectly. The music is well within the range of her sympathetic voice, and she not only acts but also looks the part charmingly, which is by no means an unimportant consideration in an opera which hinges upon love at first sight. Madame Roze's *Manon* was a repetition of former successes. Mr. McGuckin invests the character of Des Grieux, previously assumed by the late Mr. Maas, with genuine dramatic spirit, and the church scene as represented by him is a powerful piece of acting. His voice has never been in a better condition, and his claim to be recognized as the leading tenor of the English stage is henceforth established. Mr. James Sauvage's somewhat rough and ready manner was more suited to Sergeant Lescaut than it had been to Count Almaviva, and other parts were well represented by Miss Burton, Miss Vadini, Miss Presano, and Messrs. Walter Clifford and Charles Lyall, Mr. Goossens, the conductor, securing an excellent *ensemble* in the concerted pieces.

Wednesday's performance of *Faust*, which attracted a numerous audience, included Madame Georgina Burns as an excellent Margue-

rite, Mr. Ben Davies as a tuneful, albeit not very impressive, Faust, Mr. Barrington Foote as Mephistopheles, Miss Marion Burton as Siebel, and Mr. Sauvage as Valentine. Mr. Carl Rosa conducted.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

Miss Ella Russell, a light soprano, made her first appearance in England on Thursday last week, as Gilda in *Rigoletto*. She possesses one of the phenomenally high voices, extending to E, which seem to be the birthright of American singers, and had she stopped after "Caro nome," she would have established a first class reputation there and then. Unfortunately in the duet with her father, she showed that her intonation was by no means beyond fear or reproach. Signor D'Andrade is a very intellectual baritone who, although, we believe, a Russian, acts and sings very much in the French manner, and reminds us somewhat of Maurel. He did exactly, and did exceedingly well, all that custom has prescribed for Victor Hugo's Jester in his operatic dress, but failed to produce any profound impression. Mdlle. Lubatovi again appeared, and although her Maddalena was rather colourless, the public were unmistakably disposed to waive criticism on this head, in view of the lady's youth and good looks, and in hopes of what she may achieve hereafter.

Miss Russell appeared for the second time on Tuesday, as Lucia, when a fairly good performance was given. She sang "Regnava nel Silenzio," and the inevitable cabaletta which ensues, with great agility of voice, which she displayed to an even more marked degree in the mad scene where Donizetti, for reasons of his own, expects from a demented girl things which any one with all his wits about him would find it difficult to do. The all round performance was good enough, as indeed had been all the previous ones, thanks to the energy and intelligence of Signor Bevnigani, the conductor. But the house was miserably empty. The truth is, that these old-fashioned operas, without a first rate star in the cast, are a most unqualified bore now-a-days, and the sooner Signor Lago thinks of doing something new, the better it will be for him, and for the chances of Italian opera. The most successful night, so far, was that of *Faust* on Saturday last week, when a large audience attended to witness Madame Albani's Margherita, together with the Faust of Signor Gayarré, whose singing and acting were a thing to be remembered. On Thursday night, too late for notice in our present number, the *Huguenots* was put on for the first appearance of Mdlle. Elena Teodorini, the new dramatic soprano.

Concerts.

RUBINSTEIN'S RECITALS.

After successfully accomplishing the earlier stages of a musical journey, parts of which, in any less fascinating companionship, would have been found by many of the travellers to be somewhat heavy and fatiguing, Rubinstein and his audience have now emerged into a bright and familiar country where those whose tastes have been nurtured upon comparatively modern music, will doubtless begin to breathe more freely and to feel more at home.

FOURTH RECITAL.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (Born June 8, 1810, at Zwickau; died July 29, 1856, at Endenich near Bonn). 1. Fantasia, C major, Op. 17; 2. Kreisleriana, Op. 16, 1-8; 3. Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13; 4. Sonata, F sharp minor, Op. 11; 5. Fantasias, Op. 12; a. Abends; b. Nachts; c. Traumewirren; d. Wärem; 6. Vogel als Prophet; 7. Romance (D minor); 8. Carnival (Op. 9).

FIFTH RECITAL.

MUZIO CLEMENTI (Born 1752, at Rome; died March 10, 1832, at Evesham). Sonata B flat major, finishing with the Tocatta (first and last parts). JOHN FIELD (Born July 26, 1782, at Dublin; died January 11, 1837, at Moscow). Three Nocturnes: 1. E flat major; 2. A major (Rose Nocturne); 3. B flat major. JOHANN NEPOMUK HUMMEL (Born November 14, 1778, at Pressburg; died October 17, 1837, at Weimar, as musical director to the Court). Rondo B minor. IGNAZ MOSCHELES (Born May 30, 1794, at Prague; died March, 1870, at Leipzig). Etudes caracteristiques: a. Reconciliation; b. Junon; c. Cène d'Enfant.

ADOLPH HENSELT (Born May 12, 1814, at Schwabach, in Bavaria; living since 1838 at St. Petersburg). 1. Poème d'Amour; 2. Berceuse; 3. Liebeslied; 4. La Fontaine; 5. Schmerz im Glück; 6. "Si oiseau j'étais."

SIGISMUND THALBERG (Born January 7, 1812, at Geneva; died April 27, 1871, at Naples). 1. Etude A minor; 2. Don Juan Fantasia.

FRANZ LISZT (Born October 22, 1811, at Raiding, near Oedenburg, in Hungary; living at Weimar, Rome, Pesth). 1. D flat major Etude; 2. Valse caprice; 3. Consolations (E major, D flat major); 4. Au bord d'une source (1836); 5. Rhapsodies Hongroises, Nos. 6 and 12; 6. Soirées musicales (after *Kossini*); a. La Gita in Gondola; b. La Regatta Veneziana; c. La Serenata; d. La Danza (1838); 7. Transcriptions of *Schubert's* Songs: a. Auf dem Wasser zu singen; b. Ständchen; c. Erl King (1839); 8. Soirée de Vienne (A major); 9. Fantasia, "Robert le Diable."

The Schumann selection consisted of familiar works, and to many of his audience who had witnessed the recitals given by Rubinstein in former years, this fourth concert must have been a revival of old associations. The pianist's interpretation of Schumann was marked by the old clearness and beauty, with, as usual, a few startling incidents, when as in part of the "Kreisleriana" and one of the *Études Symphoniques*, some passages were rendered almost indistinguishable by the pace at which they were played. The fifth recital commenced with Clementi's Sonata in B flat, the opening theme of which is identical with the Fugue theme in the overture of the Magic Flute. It is unnecessary to attempt a description of the manner in which the selections from Liszt and Henselt were given. To do so would be merely to deal again in superlatives. The sixth recital, which took place yesterday, too late for extended notice in this issue, was devoted to compositions of Chopin.

RICHTER CONCERTS.

The fifth Richter Concert provided a solid treat to lovers of Beethoven, as the Concerto in E flat, and the Eroica Symphony, were two out of the four items of the programme. The concert opened with the Overture which Mr. Cowen had composed posed for the inauguration festival of the Liverpool Exhibition, but which was not actually performed throughout, owing to some local mismanagement. The compact form of the overture is particularly well dealt with by the composer. There are passages of great melodic beauty in the allegro movement, and the closing fugue is exceedingly clever. The chorale, composed by the late Prince Consort and re-harmonized in this work, is skilfully led up to and forms an excellent basis for the latter part. The playing of the band in this piece was beyond all praise. The composer was heartily greeted on his appearance on the platform after the performance. London audiences have had the opportunity of hearing Berlioz's music, Romeo and Juliet, in its entirety, but none the less acceptable were the two numbers, the *Scène d'Amour*, and the Scherzo, *La Reine Mab*, as given last night with most delicate execution and expression. The Concerto was a still greater triumph for Herr Richter and his band, who do not always accompany solo passages with the self-control shown on this occasion. Mr. Charles Halle's steady and admirable reading of the work was fully appreciated by a public which, in running after new idols does not at the same time forsake its old favourites. The Eroica Symphony, as played by Herr Richter's orchestra, requires no description. It brought a very long and heavy concert to a conclusion.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

To those who watch the progress of musical institutions, a public display of the talent under cultivation is always a matter of interest. Audiences on these occasions perhaps number fewer persons who come for the sake of temporary amusement, and more who attend in order to discover exceptional merit, and invariably speculate on the future career and eventual goal of some more than ordinarily promising pupil. That the tuition here given is sound the performances of Mr. C. S. Macpherson in Beethoven's Sonata in A, of Miss Sellar in Mendelssohn's Capriccio in E and "The Rivulet," and Beethoven's Sonata in G, for piano and violin, played by Misses H. Osborne and Winifred Robinson, fully testified. The organ came in for a share of attention in a theme and variations in A, composed by Beatrice Davenport, a student, and skilfully played by Mr. H. C. Tonking, and in Merkel's Sonata in D, rendered by Mr. W. J. Kipps. The individual singing of Misses Blanche Murray, K. Condy, and Agnes Janson was generally excellent, and received general approval. The choral singers under Mr. William Shakespeare had very little to do, but did that little well.

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

SATURDAY, June 5.—10 a.m.: Service, Ouseley in A; No. 222 (Ps. lxxii. 11), Boyce, "All kings shall fall down," from "Give the king." 3 p.m.: Prendergast in F, No. 855 (Ps. xlviii. 8), Croft, "We wait for Thy loving-kindness."

SUNDAY, June 6 (*Sunday after Ascension*), 10 a.m.: Service (Turtle in D), throughout; Hymn after 3rd Collect, 181. 3 p.m.: Service, Turtle in D, No. 98 (Ps. xlvii. 5), Croft, "God is gone up;" Hymn after 3rd Collect, 186, verses 1, 2, 3 and 7. 7 p.m.: Service in the Nave.

Next Week's Music.

TO-DAY (SATURDAY).

P.M.

"The Marriage of Figaro" Drury Lane Theatre... 8
Mr. A. Austin's Patti Concert Albert Hall... 3
Chamber Music Concert Princes' Hall... 3
"Manon" Drury Lane Theatre... 8
"Un Ballo in Maschera" Covent Garden Theatre... 8.30

MONDAY, 7.

Mr. Kuhe's Concert St. James's Hall... 2.30
Richter Concert St. James's Hall... 8
Opera Drury Lane Theatre... 8
Miss E. Lewis's Concert Steinway Hall... 8

TUESDAY, 8.

M. Rubinstein's Pianoforte Recital St. James's Hall... 2.30
"The Troubadour" Drury Lane Theatre... 8
"Dinorah" Covent Garden Theatre... 8.30

WEDNESDAY, 9.

Mr. C. Fowler's Concert Princes' Hall... 3
Miss M. Hardy's Concert St. Andrew's Hall... 3
Opera Drury Lane Theatre... 8
Blind Normal College Concert St. James's Hall... 8

THURSDAY 10.

Richter Concert St. James's Hall... 8
"Nadeshda" Drury Lane Theatre... 8
Opera Covent Garden Theatre... 8.30

FRIDAY, 11.

Opera Drury Lane Theatre... 8

Notes and News.

LONDON.

We are glad to announce that the Queen has retained the Royal box for the entire season of English opera at Drury Lane. The blush of modesty rises to our cheek when we remember what journal it was—a journal, too, which we have reason to think is read in very high places indeed—which pointed out the desirability of such a step last week.

In case Her Majesty should take a trip to town to see the new opera, we can promise her a first-class performance, well sung, well acted, and well put upon the stage—at least if the cordial co-operation of every one concerned in the production of *The Troubadour* is any guarantee for such a consummation.

A company for the further development of Dr. Carter Moffatt's ammoniaphone has been formed under the style of "The Ammoniaphone Company, Limited," with a capital of £100,000, divided into £5 shares. Mr. C. B. Harness, to whom much of the previous success of the invention is due, will be the managing director.

The musical library of the late Mr. Josiah Pittman will be brought to the hammer by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson, on the 10th inst.

Concerts have been given by Mr. George Gear at St. George's Hall on Tuesday, and by Mdle. Ida Henry at Princes' Hall, when she cleverly played several pianoforte pieces to the delight of her hearers, and was associated with Mr. E. Howell in pianoforte and violoncello duets. Mr. W. Winch and Madame Mathilde Ziméri were the vocalists.

Great preparations are being made in order to make the annual Choral Festival of the Tonic Sol-fa choirs at the Crystal Palace, on June 5, a success. Miss Hilda Wilson is the soloist, and the large available forces

of the organization will be heard in the "Hymn of the Apostles" (*Redemption*), Mendelssohn's "Thirteenth Psalm," selection from Costa's *Naaman*, and numerous pieces by Pinsuti, Leslie, Sullivan, Smart, Handel, &c.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot? The copyright of Reichardt's "Love's Request," an immensely popular song in its day, was purchased last week by Messrs. Morley for the respectable sum of £250.

Mr. Franke's benefit concert will take place at the Albert Hall on Wednesday afternoon, June 16, when the programme will consist of selections from Wagner's operas, beginning with *Rienzi* and ending with *Parsifal*. The orchestra, increased to 150 performers, will be conducted by Dr. Hans Richter, and the vocalists engaged are Madame Valleria, Miss Pauline Cramer, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Georg Henschel.

Two new amateur orchestras gave their concerts last week. The South Hampstead orchestra is conducted by Mrs. Julian Marshall, and it asserted its existence by modestly announcing a public rehearsal at the Vestry Hall, at the charge of one shilling all over the hall. This is a step in the right direction, and an example to be held up before other amateurs. The band of thirty performers had been well trained by the lady who wielded the *bâton*. It is true there was a sprinkling of professionals throughout the band, and some very well-known players were assisting. But credit is due to the conductor for the way in which the various numbers had been taught to her flock, of which many were totally inexperienced players. There was not only no hitch throughout, but the careful phrasing of certain passages showed that an intelligent conductor was carrying out some well-conceived and perhaps ambitious principles and plans. The pieces which call for most remark were Grieg's Two Melodies for Strings. These had evidently been very carefully studied by the band. It is likely that the Vestry Hall will be even better filled on the next occasion of a performance by this orchestra.—Mr. Dolmetsch gave a successful matinée in the Marlborough Rooms, his band consisting entirely of ladies, some of whom are very young. As a violin class it promises well, Mr. Dolmetsch being himself an able violinist, and a composer of some experience. Mr. Dolmetsch's little daughter eight years old, besides playing in the orchestra, executed a solo on the violoncello in remarkably good tune, and, but for one hitch, correctly. We should, however, have preferred to hear her in some simpler music than Schubert's "Sei mir gegrüsst." Miss Pyne played two violin pieces by Mr. Dolmetsch very gracefully.

The thirty-fourth students' concert of the Royal College of Music was held in the West Theatre of the Royal Albert Hall, on the 27th. Rheinberger's Introduction and Fugue for organ in E minor from Sonata No. 8, was played by Mr. Culley; Messrs. Price and Ridding being heard in vocal pieces. A clever young violinist, Mr. Sutcliffe, played Bach's Sonata for violin in E minor, and also led Spohr's double quartet in E minor, an admirable performance of which was given by the pupils. Miss Kellett's rendering of Beethoven's pianoforte Sonata in E, Op. 109, was intelligent, and received due encouragement.

The funds of "The Churchill Home" will no doubt benefit to a large extent by two grand concerts given last week at Dudley House, by permission of the Countess of Dudley; the first of which was honoured by the presence of the Princess of Wales and her daughter. A large display of amateur and professional talent was enlisted to help the cause, among the latter being Messrs. John Thomas, H. Lazarus, Whitehouse and Herr Ludwig, who each played solos on their respective instruments. Mdlle. Dora Sellini, Mrs. E. Ponsonby, and Messrs. Robertson and Marsh contributed vocal and operatic selections; and Miss Detchon exercised her fancy in a pleasing recitation and melody, "The Spinning Wheel," to the harp accompaniment of John Thomas. Special attention was centred in the public appearance of Lady Randolph Churchill as a pianist at the second concert, which, despite the absence of Royalty, had a much larger audience than the first. Lady Churchill's playing of an "Impromptu" by Chopin, was characterized by a powerful tone, and ease as regards the technical difficulties of execution, and was received with enthusiastic applause at the finish; this accomplished lady also accompanied the singing of Mrs. Ronalds in the "The Lost Chord," with the addition of harp and harmonium, which was one of the most successful items in this novel concert scheme. Special commendation is due to the committee of ladies for their share in the arrangements, and particularly to the Hon. Mrs. Eliot, who accompanied with care, and to whose untiring energy the concerts no doubt owe much of their success.

It is said that Covent Garden will not be available this year for the usual autumn season of Promenade Concerts. Rumour has it that Manzotti's latest ballet "Amor," recently produced at the Scala Milan, is to be given at this theatre. Signor Riccardo Gallico, the agent in London, is negotiating with a view to its production.

An evening concert will be given on Wednesday, June 16, at Princes' Hall, by the talented artist, Miss Mary Carmichael, in conjunction with Mr. William Nicholl. The programme includes a varied selection of instrumental and vocal music, in which Miss Carmichael, Mrs. Bartholomew, Miss Hilda Wilson, Messrs. Wm. Nicholl and Alec Marsh, Miss Foskett (piano), Madame Gabrielle Vaillant (violin), and Mr. Adolphe Brouil (cello), will take part.

Among a number of performances which took place on Saturday, we may briefly mention the following:—Senor Sarasate's fifth and last concert in the afternoon at St. James' Hall, when the violinist was heard in Mendelssohn's and Mr. Mackenzie's concerti and other pieces, all familiar works which require no further comment. The hall was crowded, and the applause frequent and vociferous. Mr. Cusins conducted.—On the same afternoon Herr Reinecke's cantata, *The Enchanted Swan*, was successfully rendered by the students of the Guildhall School of Music.—A concert given for the benefit of the Hospital for Epilepsy and Paralysis at Grosvenor House was, in an artistic sense, superior to most entertainments of this class. Members of the Richter orchestra, under their great conductor, co-operated, and Mr. Franke's vocal quartet gave selections from Brahms's "Liebeslieder Walzer," Schumann's "Spanisches Liederspiel," and Roentgen's "Toscanische Rispetti."—A crowded and brilliant audience attended the forty-first concert of the Musical Artists' Society, given on the same evening at Willis's rooms. Among the pieces performed were a String Quartet in A minor, by Oliveria Prescott; Andante and Pastorale for piano and violin, by Walter Macfarren; a String Quartet in B flat, by Rosalind F. Ellicott; Ballad for violoncello and piano, by Tobias A. Matthay; Scene from Stanislaus Elliot's unpublished opera, *Victorian*, and various songs.

The musical capabilities of the Westminster Orchestral Society, led by Mr. H. C. Tonking, were again satisfactorily utilized at their fourth concert at the Town Hall, last Saturday evening, in Macfarren's overture "Robin Hood," and Auber's *Masaniello*, and accompaniments to the male choruses. The listener was agreeably surprised at the satisfactory results obtained; no doubt in a great measure due to the Society's able conductor, Mr. C. S. Macpherson. The hearty applause after a first performance of two ballet airs by Rowland Brient brought forward the young composer. Pianoforte and flute solos were given by Mr. Rickard and Mr. Lewis Barrett; Madame Wilson-Osman, Miss Murray, and Messrs. Smith and Williams were among the vocalists. This society now boasts a complete band and chorus of about a hundred voices, and should meet with every encouragement from local amateurs whom it provides with intellectual recreation, and on whom its existence is dependent.

Mr. Cowen's *Sleeping Beauty* was very successfully performed at the third Concert of the North-East London Choral Society, given on Wednesday evening, at the Morley Hall, Hackney. The soloists were Madame Clara West, Miss Jeanie Rosse, Messrs. Alfred Kenningham and W. G. Forington. Mr. John E. West conducted.

Miss Pauline Ellice, a pupil of Mr. Emil Bach, gave a vocal and instrumental concert at Princes' Hall, on Tuesday evening last. When we mention that the young pianist is only ten years of age, and that she played with orchestra and entirely from memory the pianoforte parts of Weber's Concerto in C major and Mendelssohn's Capriccio in B minor, besides various pieces for pianoforte alone by Bach—Tausig, Schubert, Moszkowsky, Chopin, and other composers, it will be seen that the concert was one of more than ordinary interest. Miss Ellice has already acquired powers of execution which reflect credit upon the training she has received from her excellent master, and feeling will no doubt be added when she becomes a few years older. Mrs. Armstrong, from Melbourne, made her first appearance in Europe, and produced a very favourable impression in an aria from *La Traviata*, and Ganz's song, "Sing, sweet bird," the latter of which was encored. Effective assistance was also rendered by the other two vocalists, Mdlle. Marie de Lido and Mr. Deane Brand. The overtures to *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Prometheus* were played by the orchestra under Mr. Ganz, who conducted and accompanied with his usual ability.

The music at the forty-first dinner of the Royal General Theatrical Fund given last Wednesday at the Freemasons' Tavern, was under the direction of Mr. Ganz. It is needless, therefore, to say that the programme represented, in this case, an entertainment of high class. The following artists sang: Mesdames Antoinette Sterling, Agnes Larkcom, Helen D'Alton, Effie Chapuy, Armstrong; and Messrs. Fryer, De Lacy, and Maybrick; and a violin solo was contributed by Mdlle. Anna Lang. Mrs. Armstrong, one of our most recent and not least welcome colonial acquisitions, is gifted with a high soprano voice of fine quality. Her singing in Ganz's song, "Sing, sweet bird," was greatly applauded, and had to be repeated. She also rendered with excellent effect Gounod's "Ave Maria," with violin accompaniment. The dinner, at which Mr. Augustus Harris presided, was a success both from a social and philanthropic point of view, and the appeals of the eloquent chairman caused subscriptions to flow in bravely.

PROVINCIAL.

CAMBRIDGE.—The two Easter Term concerts of the Cambridge University Musical Society will take place at the Guildhall, on Thursday, June 10, at 8.45 p.m., and Tuesday, June 15, at 2.30 p.m. There will be a chamber concert, at which the following will be given:—Pianoforte Quintet, Op. 25 (Stanford), first performance; Songs (Brahms and Parry); String Quartet, Op. 18, No. 6 (Beethoven); and soli for pianoforte

and violin. Performers—Messrs. W. H. Speer, Gompertz, Betjemann Jung, P. Burnett, and Stanford; vocalist Miss Harrison. The latter will be a choral and orchestral concert, at which the programme will consist of:—Selection from the music to *The Eumenides* (Stanford); Two Choruses for female voices (Brahms); "Elegiac Song" (Beethoven); Part Song, "In silent night" (Brahms); Siegfried Idyll (Wagner); Selection from the music to "The Birds" (Parry). Vocalist, Mr. Walter Ford; conductor Mr. Stanford.

GLASGOW.—Madame Helen Hopekirk, lately arrived from America, gave a successful pianoforte recital in Glasgow, on Saturday afternoon, May 29, when she played selections from Schumann, Liszt, D'Albert, and other composers.—The second annual general meeting of the Glasgow Society of Musicians was held in the Grand Hotel on Friday evening, May 28, the president in the chair. The secretary submitted the annual report, and the treasurer the financial statement for the past year. Both reports were unanimously adopted. The chairman congratulated the society on the termination of such a brilliant season. The election of office-bearers and committee was then proceeded with, and resulted as follows:—President, Mr. J. Seligmann; vice-president, Mr. Emile Berger; treasurer, Mr. W. H. Cole; secretary, Mr. W. T. Hoeck; committee, Messrs. W. M. Miller, C. Johnstone, C. Woolnooth, and A. Macbeth. The roll showed a total of 107 members and associates. The society gave seven banquets during the course of the year; amongst other distinguished musicians who were entertained were Drs. Hans Richter and A. C. Mackenzie, W. A. Barrett, &c. A hearty vote of thanks having been proposed to the chairman, who acknowledged the compliment, the proceedings terminated.

TAUNTON.—On Thursday evening, May 27, the Taunton Philharmonic Association gave a successful performance of Sir G. A. Macfarren's *Lady of the Lake*, before a large and appreciative audience. The work is by no means an easy one, yet its many difficulties had been thoroughly mastered by the chorus. The orchestral beauties were interpreted by an efficient band, and the solo parts were well rendered. Miss Agnes Larkcom, who undertook the part of Ellen, gained fresh laurels in a difficult and trying part. The contralto music was allotted to Miss Maria Hayward, who sang the parts of Malcolm Graeme and Blanche of Devan. In the wild ballads of the mad Blanche, Miss Hayward's singing was excellent, while after the "Lay of the imprisoned huntsman," an encore was demanded, but was wisely refused by the conductor. The violin obligato to this latter song was sympathetically played by Mr. M. G. Rice, of Torquay, the leader of the band. The part of Roderick Dhu was well filled by Mr. W. D. Powell, a promising young baritone, who made a favourable impression by his intelligent and spirited rendering of the music given to Clan-Alpine's chieftain. The "Anathema," and the song "This fertile plain," were perhaps his most successful efforts. The other characters were efficiently filled by Mr. H. E. Small, tenor, and Mr. A. Richmond and Mr. Loveday, bass. The choruses, which are unusually varied and effective, were sung with taste, accuracy and precision, the result being very creditable to all concerned, and bearing witness to conscientious study and frequent rehearsal. Special mention should be made of the unaccompanied choruses, which were sung with faultless intonation. The work was enthusiastically received, and the performance, which is, without doubt, by far the best the society has ever given, reflects great credit on the conductor, Mr. T. J. Dudeney, L.R.A.M., F.C.O., who is to be highly complimented on the result obtained.

FOREIGN.

Mr. Frederick H. Cowen's cantata, *St. Ursula*, was performed with great success at the Cleveland (U.S.A.) Festival on the 12th of last month.

A commemoration plaque has been put on the house in Coblenz where Henrietta Sontag was born.

The subscriptions in Leipsic towards the proposed monument to Joachim Raff have already reach the sum of 7,000 marks.

It is stated that the National Opera Company at Moscow, encouraged by the success in Paris of Slaviansky d'Agreñef's choir, contemplate making a tour next winter for the performance of Russian opera in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and London.

Flora mirabilis, a new opera by the young composer, Spiro Samara, recently produced in Milan, is stated to have been a somewhat remarkable success.

Intending visitors to the Bayreuth performances of *Tristan* and *Parsifal* in July will be sorry to learn that Herr Richter will be unable to take part in them, the necessary leave of absence having been refused by the Vienna Opera House.

Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado* in the English version was performed with great success on Wednesday last, at Wallner's Theatre in Berlin. The Crown Prince and Princess were present. Mr. D'Oyly Carte has taken the theatre for thirty nights, and intends to produce *H. M. S. Pinafore*, and possibly a third opera.

BRUSSELS.—A successful performance of *The Sorcerer* has been given by the English Colony in Brussels on behalf of local charity, an event which will derive additional interest for English visitors from the fact

that the principal part was sustained, and well sustained, by Miss Mary Lemmens, daughter of the eminent singer Mme. Lemmens Sherrington, who has for some time past devoted her energies to the Conservatoire here. All the other lady characters were pupils of Madame Lemmens, who also drilled the choruses, and was in fact the leading spirit of the entertainment. It has been interesting to note the effect upon the Belgian mind of the peculiar vein of Gilbertian humour, and it is scarcely surprising that many here to whom it comes fresh and in an unfamiliar tongue should have somewhat missed the point of it. Even the plot seems, in some cases, to have offered difficulties. The *Gazette*, for instance, informs its readers that the wholesale distribution of the philtre at the celebrated tea party was designed in order to awaken love in Aline and the grenadier Alexis, who had previously regarded each other with dislike—the very reverse of the real case, so that Mr. Gilbert's topsy-turvydom is again turned upside down. Mention should not be omitted of the efficient services also rendered by Mmes. Douilly and Faulkner, Wienkaniska and Goodeve, as well as by Colonel Goodeve, who acted as manager, and Messrs. Scappe, Sparrow, Stone, Faulkner, Munro, Stone, and Dunlop.

PARIS—May 31. The second performance in Paris was given at the Trocadéro yesterday of Gounod's *Mors et Vita*, with the same cast as before. The prices of admission on this occasion were considerably reduced.—Last Wednesday, at the Opéra Comique the "fêtes du commerce" were celebrated by an entertainment introducing the element of personal interest, in which Parisian audiences delight. All the members of the company were afforded opportunities of appearing in representative pieces, selected from more than a dozen operas of different composers, including *Zampa*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Dinorah*, *le Songe d'une Nuit d'Été*, *Lakmé*, *Maitre Ambros*, and many others.—On Friday *Carmen* was given with an entirely new cast, Mlle. Deschamps, in the principal rôle achieving only a modified success.

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